



North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force 2020 Action Agenda*

Legislative “support” items receive the highest level of support from the CTF.

Legislative “endorse” items are led by others and endorsed by the CTF.

“Administrative” items are currently non-legislative action items sought to be further examined or advanced by the CTF.

Recommendations and administrative efforts to prevent youth suicide and firearm-related deaths and injuries to children

***Support** legislation requiring suicide prevention training and a risk referral protocol in schools, with specific requirements related to frequency and duration of the training, who receives the training, and minimum criteria for training components.¹

***Support** state funding for a new statewide firearm safety initiative, as recommended by the 2017 Firearm Safety Stakeholder group, that is focused on education and awareness surrounding firearm safe storage and distribution of free gun locks; funding to go to DHHS to appropriately engage a third-party organization to implement the initiative. (Two-year funding estimate is for \$155,700: \$86,500 for year one; \$69,200 for year two.)

***Administrative** support to explore and pursue possibilities for funding for a three-year lead suicide prevention coordinator position in North Carolina that would coordinate cross-agency efforts to carry out implementation of the 2015 NC Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan and determine a sustainability plan for ongoing statewide coordination for implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Recommendations on workplace supports to strengthen child and family health, well-being, and economic stability

Endorse legislation that would guarantee all North Carolina workers the right to reasonable pregnancy and lactation accommodations in the workplace.

Endorse passage of a kin care and safe days bill that would guarantee all North Carolina workers the right to use their sick days (whether paid or job-protected unpaid) to care for a sick loved one, seek preventative care, or deal with the physical, mental, or legal impacts of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Endorse legislation addressing paid family leave insurance in North Carolina.

***Note:** Items with an asterisk (*) are those carrying over from the 2019 CTF Action Agenda. A previous version of this agenda which was reported in the CTF 2020 annual report had certain items marked “pending,” as they were being recommended by Task Force committees but not yet approved by the full Task Force for 2020 due to cancellation of the final meeting of the Task Force in March during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the August 31, 2020 meeting of the full CTF, all of the pending items received approval so this agenda has been updated to remove the “pending” status of those items from this agenda.

Recommendations to strengthen the statewide Child Fatality Prevention System to increase the system's ability to prevent child abuse, neglect, and death

***Support** legislation, agency action, and policy change to implement the following changes to the Child Fatality Prevention System (CFP System):

- I. Implement centralized state-level staff with whole-system oversight in one location within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) with the formation of a new cross-sector Fatality Review and Data Group and with child fatality staff in the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) remaining in OCME.
- II. Implement a centralized electronic data and information system that includes North Carolina joining 45 other states to participate in the National Child Death Review Case Reporting System.
- III. Reduce the volume of team reviews by changing the types of deaths required to be reviewed by fatality review teams to be according to certain categories most likely to yield prevention opportunities.
- IV. Reduce the number and types of teams performing fatality reviews by combining the functions of the four current types of teams into one with different procedures and required participants for different types of reviews (including intensive-type reviews of abuse or neglect-related deaths with state-level staff assistance), and giving teams the option to choose whether to be single or multi-county teams. DHHS should study and determine an effective framework for meeting the federal requirements for Citizen Review Panels and for reviewing active DSS cases without using all local review teams for these purposes.
- V. Formalize the three committees of the Child Fatality Task Force (CFTF) with certain required committee members and expand the required CFTF report to address the whole CFP system with required report to be distributed to additional state leaders beyond the Governor and General Assembly.

***Support** for maintaining current state funding for existing positions and operations that support Child Fatality Prevention System work, and for additional recurring funding to support this work pursuant to DHHS determinations to be made related to the most appropriate placement and staffing configuration for this central office as well as funding needs of local health departments to support CFP system work.

*Pursuant to DHHS determinations to be made related to launching a Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program to inform state-level action related to the prevention of child deaths, **support** funding to enable implementation of the evidence-informed practice of FIMR as a pilot.

Recommendation and administrative effort to prevent infant deaths

***Support** a state appropriation of \$85,000 in additional funding to expand the Safe Sleep NC program that works to prevent sleep-related infant deaths.

Administrative support for continuing to work on strengthening laws addressing infant safe surrender with the intent to bring this item back for consideration prior to the 2021 legislative long session. (This was a legislative support item in 2019.)

Recommendation and administrative efforts to prevent motor vehicle-related injuries and deaths to children

***Support** legislation that would require ignition interlocks for all DWI offenders.

Administrative support to continue efforts to gather information on the potential for future legislation that allows for primary enforcement of all unrestrained back seat passengers with the intent to bring this item back for consideration by the Unintentional Death Prevention Committee prior to the 2021 legislative long session. (This was a legislative support item in 2019.)

Administrative support for a child passenger safety study by outside group to examine the status of North Carolina child passenger safety laws in comparison to recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Highway Safety Board. The study will be performed by experts including the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center, the Governor's Highway Safety Program, the North Carolina Pediatric Society the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and the North Carolina Division of Public Health, bringing information learned back to the Task Force.

Recommendations to prevent harm to infants and youth caused by tobacco and nicotine use

***Endorse** additional Quitline NC funding of \$3 million.

***Endorse** at least \$7 million in funding for youth nicotine use prevention, including e-cigarettes.

Administrative efforts to strengthen child abuse and neglect reporting education and awareness

Administrative support for North Carolina DSS in the development of more robust and user-friendly web pages dedicated to education and information on child abuse and neglect reporting which includes information on prevention resources and services, what happens to the family and reporter once a report is made, and resources for learning more such as a link to video training. NC DSS should also ensure that NC Cares 360 includes information on CAN reporting, and web techniques should be used to make it more likely that relevant web searches will show NC DSS web pages focused on abuse and neglect reporting as a primary source of information in North Carolina.

Administrative support for work being done by Prevent Child Abuse NC through its contract with NC Division of Social Services to develop training and collateral materials addressing child abuse and neglect reporting to support broad education of professionals and the public.

Administrative support for contacting the Justice Academy about including training on child abuse and neglect reporting for training of law enforcement officers.